



Montgomery County Council

From the office of Councilmember Howard Denis

News Release

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Statement by Councilmember Howard A. Denis Regarding County Executive Duncan's Veto of Bill 17-01, Air Quality Control - Amendments

I support County Executive Duncan's veto of the Air Quality Control Bill. He is right in saying that the smoking provision opens the door to the County being drawn into squabbles between neighbors.

The smoking provision, which I did not support, created enormous consternation among Montgomery County citizens. This provision was not part of the County Executive's original recommendations. I believe the smoking provision -- one provision in a nearly 30 page bill -- is totally unenforceable. That's why I voted for a motion to strike it from the bill when it came before the Council.

I voted for the bill as a whole because I supported its other provisions that strengthen protection of people in their homes from harmful air pollution. The Air Quality Control bill was the first comprehensive update of the County's Air Quality Ordinance in 25 years. The bill was intended to provide much needed technical and regulatory changes that have occurred since the 70s. However due to the public reaction to the smoking provision, it has become impossible to make a case for the bill's other valid provisions.

Other provisions included an extension of the law to cover apartment buildings and offices, regulation of the burning of leaves and trash, regulation of airborne dust from construction sites, and numerous updated definitions and technical changes that bring the county's law up to date with federal and state laws.

I look forward to working with the County Executive to support a bill that does not include this vague and unenforceable provision.